

H. Richardson (J.)

PROPOSAL
FOR THE
CONVERSION
OF

The Popish Natives
OF IRELAND,
TO

The *Establis'd Religion*;

With the *Reasons* upon which it is Grounded:

And an *Answer* to the Objections made to it.

In the Church I had rather speak five Words with my Understanding, than by my Voice I might Teach Others also, than Ten Thousand Words in an unknown Tongue, 1 Cor. 14. 9.

And where all or the most part of the People are *Irish*, they [viz. *The Church-Wardens*] shall provide also the said Books; [viz. *Two Books of Common-Prayer, and the Bible*] in the *Irish* Tongue, so soon as they may be had. The charge of these *Irish* Books, to be born also, wholly by the Parish. Canon 94th of the Church of *Ireland*,

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MDCCLXI.

PROPOSAL FOR THE CONVERSION

The Popish Natives OF IRELAND

T O The English Religion;



With the Reasons which it is grounded
And an Answer to the Objections made to it

In the Church I had rather find the Truth with my Understanding, than be
convinced I might have done also, when the Church was in its infancy
Tongue, 1 Cor. 14. 2.

And where all or the most part of the People are Popish, they
[viz. The Church-Wardens] must provide also the said Books,
[viz. Two Books of Common-Prayer, and the Bible] in the Irish
Tongue, so soon as they may be, and. The Church of
Irish Books, to be bound up, wholly by the English. Canon says
of the Church of Ireland.

Dublin: Printed by E. Smith, in the New Hall-Office-Print-
ing-House in the Strand, at the Corner of St. Dunstons Church.
MDCCLXXI.

To the Most Reverend, and Right
Reverend Fathers in God, the
Lords Arch-Bishops, and Bi-
shops of the *Upper-House*.

And to the Reverend the Clergy
of the *Lower-House*, in *Convoca-
tion* Assembled.

THIS *Proposal* for the Conversion of the
Popish Natives of Ireland, to the E-
stablish'd Religion, with the *Reasons*
upon which it is Grounded : And the *Answer*
to the Objections made to it;

Is humbly Submitted and Dedicated,

By their most Obedient Son,

And most humble Servant,

John Richardson.

To the Most Reverend, and Right
Reverend Fathers in God, the
Lords Arch-Bishops, and Bi-
shops of the Upper-House.
And to the Reverend the Clergy
of the Lower-House, in Conven-
tion Assembled.

THIS Proposal for the Conversion of the
Pagan Natives of Ireland, to the E-
stablish'd Religion, with the Reasons
upon which it is Grounded: And the Answer
to the Objections made to it;

Is humbly Submitted and Dedicated,

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A
P R O P O S A L
F O R T H E
C O N V E R S I O N
O F T H E
Popish Natives of Ireland.
T O T H E
E s t a b l i s h ' d R e l i g i o n.

W Hereas several Laws have been lately made in this Kingdom, to weaken and discourage the Popish Interest therein, and particularly to extinguish the Succession of the Popish Clergy, whereby their Number is already sensibly decreased, and in some Counties the whole Order will probably

B bly

bly fail within a few Years. And it is therefore to be hoped, that by the Divine Blessing, those Means may prove successful for attaining the good Ends for which they were intended, if they be seconded with proper and effectual Methods of Instructing the Irish, and reclaiming them from their Errors.

And whereas the Conversion of the Natives of Ireland to the Establish'd Church is a Work, which besides the great and many Benefits both Spiritual and Temporal, which would thereby accrew to themselves, would also bring a considerable Addition to the Strength of this Kingdom, and would tend very much to promote and preserve the Security and Tranquillity of it, and to augment the Wealth and Improvement thereof.

And whereas the want of the necessary Means of Propagating the Establish'd Religion among the Natives of Ireland, is a great hindrance of their Conversion, and hath given Popish Priests and Jesuits great Advantage of keeping them in their Errors and Superstitions, and a blind Obedience to the Foreign Jurisdiction of the Church of Rome : And the said Priests and Jesuits have taken thence Opportunity of Corrupting Them with Principles, and Exciting them to Practices of Dangerous Consequence to Her Majesty's Sacred Person and Government, and to the Protestant Succession as by Law Establish'd. It is humbly Propos'd,

1. That a Competent Number of Ministers duly Qualify'd to Instruct the Natives, and to perform the Offices of Religion to them in their own Language, be Provided and Encouraged by a suitable Maintenance to be sent among them.

2. That

2. *That the Approbation and Admission of each of these Ministers be in the Bishop of the Diocese, and that they shall Officiate in such Places and under such Rules as the Bishop shall Appoint; and shall in all Respects be subject to the Jurisdiction of the Bishop, as the other Clergy are.*

3. *That the Bible, Common-Prayer-Book, and an Exposition of the Church Catechism be Printed in Irish, for the Administration of the Ordinances of Religion to them in their own Tongue.*

4. *That a sufficient Number of Charity Schools be Erected, for the Instruction of the Irish Children Gratis in the English Tongue, and the Establish'd Religion; and that some proper Encouragement be given to Irish Children Educated in those Schools, the Benefit of which Schools may be extended to the Children of poor Protestants.*

5. *That the Honourable House of Commons would be pleas'd to Grant a Fund for the carrying on so Pious and Charitable a Design.*

6. *In Regard that this Work will be attended with great Charge and Expence, and will probably meet with many Difficulties and Obstructions, which cannot be easily foreseen; and that the Money so Granted may be applied to the Uses and Purposes for which it is given, and no other : It is humbly Propos'd, That Application be made to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, that a Society be Appointed and Impower'd by Royal Charter, to receive voluntary Contributions,*

tributions, and Legacies, and to make Purchases to be apply'd to the Uses aforementioned; *And*, Also Authoriz'd and Intrusted to Receive, Manage, and Dispose of such Sum or Sums of Money, as may be Granted by Parliament, in such manner as by Law shall be Appointed. *And*, *Whereas Her Majesty hath been Graciously Pleas'd to Impower the Lord-Lieutenant of this Kingdom, to Constitute by Letters-Patent, Commissioners for applying the First-Fruits of this Kingdom to the Buying in of Improvements. Lastly, It is humbly Propos'd, That Application may be made to Her Majesty, To Erect, Constitute, and Appoint One and the same Society for Both the aforementioned Purposes, relating to the Conversion of the Irish, and Buying-in of Improvements.*

THE



The Conversion OF THE NATIVES.

WHEN a Design is set on Foot, to Convert a Nation to the True Religion, one would think that the ordinary Gospel-means, are the fittest and most unexceptionable; Wherefore, to prevent all just Cause of Exception about so useful, and necessary an Undertaking, the Scheme here Propos'd for the Conversion of the Popish Natives, was fram'd according to that Excellent Pattern which our Blessed Saviour and His Apostles have left us. But notwithstanding this, many Objections have been made to it, especially to the 1st, 3d, 4th, and 6th Articles: I shall therefore with all Deference and Submission to better Understandings, endeavour to shew the Reasons upon which the said Articles are Grounded; and then give a plain and short Answer to the Objections made to them.

As for the First, and Third Articles, which depend the one upon the other, they are founded upon the Word of God, and the nature of the Thing: To make this appear, I desire

2 *A Duty incumbent on all Christians;*

first that these two following Propositions may be taken for Granted, because they can be proved beyond denial.

First, That there are great Numbers of the Natives of this Kingdom, who cannot speak *English* at all: and that of those who can speak *English*, so far as relates to the common and ordinary Concerns of Life, there are not a few, who do not understand it so well, as to reap any Benefit from our Prayers and Sermons in *English*.

Secondly, That the Doctrines and Practices of the *Romanists* are so very corrupt, that they are of dangerous Consequence to their Souls, and do very much hazard their Salvation.

Now the Case being so with them, all Christians are obliged according to their several Abilities and Circumstances, to use their Endeavour to recover them from the miserable and dangerous Condition wherein they are, *that they may be turned from Darkneß unto Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God.* For all Christians in general do Pray, or at least ought to Pray daily, that *Christ's Kingdom may come*, that is, that his Gospel may be received in its purity by all Persons: *That God's Ways may be known upon Earth, and his saving Health among all Nations.* Now if they be sincere in their Prayers, they must do their Parts for obtaining these things; it being a known Rule in Divinity, that we ought to use our utmost Endeavours, for the obtaining of that, for which we are commanded to Pray. All Christians are also commanded as they have Opportunity *to do good unto all Men*, Gal. 6. 10. to do good to their Bodies, and especially to the better part of them, *their Souls*, by Instructing their Ignorant Minds, and removing their Prejudices, and reclaiming

ing them from their Errors, which is to do them Good which will last for ever. And when they have not Personal Opportunities, they are obliged to it according to their Power, by lending and bestowing good Books, by teaching the Poor to read, by encouraging Learning and Religion, and by assisting the Teachers and Professors of them.

But this Duty of Instructing the Ignorant, and reclaiming the Erroneous, is a Duty especially incumbent upon all the Pastors of Christ's Church. We are obliged to Propagate the saving Truths of Religion among all Men, to the best of our Power and Ability, by the very Words, and the main Tenour of that Commission from which we derive our Office, *Matth. 28. 19, 20. Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And lo, I am with you alway even unto the End of the World, Amen.* i. e. Endeavour to Disciple all Nations, or to make all the World true Christians, by Baptizing them, and by Instructing them to believe and obey my Gospel; and to encourage you to undertake this, I do give you the Promise of my Presence and Assistance to the End of the World.

Our Saviour knew very well that it was not possible for his Apostles in their own Persons to do all this. He must therefore be understood, to design that their Office should continue by a Succession from them to the End of the World, and in Consequence of this to expect and require that this great Work should be carried on by their Successors in all Ages; So that we who are appointed to succeed the Apostles in their Office, (some with a larger, and others

4 *The Clergy oblig'd to endeavour the Irish,*

others with a less Share of their Power) are obliged, by Vertue of it, to finish and perfect what remains to be done of this Matter, as far as we can.

This farther appears from the Promise which our Saviour annexes to the Discharge of this Duty. *And lo I am with you alway even unto the End of the World;* as much as if he said, *Your Continuance here being to be but short, to hearten and excite you and all others who shall be concerned in this Office to go on with this Work, I do assure you that my Presence and Assistance shall be given unto the End of the World, not only to you, but to your Successors in this Office of Teaching all Nations, or Preaching the Gospel to every Creature.* So that as we expect the Blessing of Christ on our selves as his Ministers, we ought as much as in us lies, to endeavour to Propagate his Religion among those who sit in Darkness, and in the Shadow of Death.

Wherefore since our Blessed Saviour doth not except the *Irish* Nation, when he commands his Apostles, and in them their Successors to teach all Nations, I infer, that it is our indispenfible Duty to use our Endeavours to instruct the *Popish* Natives of this Kingdom in the true Religion, and to reclaim them from their Errors.

And if it be so, then we are obliged to do this in their own Language, there being no other way of Instructing them in the saving Knowledge of Religion, but by proposing the necessary Truths of it to their Minds in a Language which they understand.

This also obliges us to Publish the Scriptures to them in *Irish*, that they may come by the Knowledge of God's revealed Will in a known Tongue, the *Reasons* for Printing the Bible in *Irish* now, being the same as for Publish-

ing it in every Tongue and Language wherein the Gospel was first Preached.

And as our happy Constitution stands both in Church and State, we are for the same Reason obliged to Publish the *Common-Prayer-Book* in *Irish*, that the Ordinances of Religion may be administred to them in a known Tongue, according to the Forms therein prescrib'd, and no other.

And considering the Slowness of some Mens Understandings, and that Printed *Bibles* and *Common-Prayer-Books* cannot be had by every one, it will be very useful, if not necessary towards the attaining the same End and Design, that some other pious and edifying Treatises of Religion, especially *An Exposition of the Church Catechism*, be Printed in the same Language, that so the means of Instruction may be more plentifully offered to them.

This Argument taken from Scripture, for converting the Natives by the means proposed in the First and Third Articles, is so very plain and evident, that it cannot be opposed without contradicting our Saviour. For our Blessed Lord having commanded us to *go and Teach all Nations* without Exception, this Command obliges us to Instruct the Natives in *Irish* until they understand some other Language; And therefore whatsoever *Objections* are made to it, mean as much, as that we should not *go and Teach all Nations*, which is an express contradiction to our Saviour, so that I might pass it by without any further Answer.

But because some Persons by taking a wrong View of these things, have not only been induced to make *Objections* to them, but also to insist upon them, I shall consider them with all the clearness and brevity that I can.

6 *The Popish Religion, not the Irish Language*

It. *It is Objected, That to Print Books in Irish, and to send Missionaries among the Natives to Instruct them in their own Language, is very destructive of the English Interest in Ireland.* But I humbly desire that it may be considered.

1. That nothing tends more effectually to preserve the Peace and Tranquillity of this Kingdom, and to augment the Improvement thereof, and consequently to promote and secure the *English* Interest therein, than the Conversion of the *Irish* to the Establish'd Religion.

2. Printing Books in *Irish*, and sending Missionaries among the Natives to Instruct them, and Administer the Ordinances of Religion to them in a Language which they understand, are the necessary means of converting them; and therefore cannot be destructive of the *English* Interest, for if the End be good, the necessary Means must be so to.

3. Preaching in the *Irish* Language is not an Encouragement of the *Irish* Interest, any more, than preaching in *French* in *England* is an Encouragement of the *French* Interest; For the *Irish* Papists who can speak *English*, ever were, and still are as great Enemies to the *English* Interest, as the *Irish* Papists who cannot speak *English*. And I see no reason why the *Welsh* Language in *England*, and the *Irish* Language in *Scotland* should not be as pernicious to the *British* Interest, as the *Irish* Language in *Ireland*: Wherefore it is very Evident, that it is the *Popish* Religion, and not the *Irish* Language that is repugnant to the *English* Interest in *Ireland*.

4. To Administer the Ordinances of Religion to the *Irish* in their own Language, is therefore the most effectual way to destroy the *Irish* Interest in *Ireland*: For the Interest of the
Popish

Popish Natives in *Ireland*, as opposed to the *English* Interest, is either to Extirpate or to Subdue the *English* Nation in this Kingdom, that so they may have their Estates, their Substance, and the whole Kingdom to themselves. Now the proper Method to prevent such a Design, is to convert them to the Protestant Religion, and surely the best, the only way of doing this, is to apply to them in a Language which they understand.

5. The Laws which have been lately made in *Ireland* against *Popery*, have encreased the Displeasure of the Natives against the Establishment both in Church and State, and the *Dissenters* perceiving this, sent a Message to the Commissioners of the *General Assembly* of *Scotland*, desiring that Missionaries might be sent from the *Highlands*, in order to Convert them to their Religion. What Effects this Message had I cannot tell, but this I know, that the *Dissenters* have already begun to use their Endeavours to draw them over to their Party, by Preaching to them in a known Tongue. So that there is just Cause to fear, that if we neglect to use the same Means, the *Papists* of *Ireland* instead of becoming an additional Strength to the Establish'd Church by their Conversion, will be added to the great Number of *Dissenters* in this Kingdom, which would in good earnest be very destructive of the Interest of the Church, if not of the English Interest, in it.

Idly. It is Objected, That to Print Books in Irish and to send Missionaries to Preach in that Tongue, is directly against Law, and the Statute of the 18th. of Henry the 8th. for the English Order, Habit, and Language, declares that those that do so, shall, whatever they may pretend, be deemed as Enemies to the King, and English Interest.

To

8 *Preaching in Irish not contrary to Law.*

To which I Answer.

I. That in the Preamble of this Act (in which there are no particular Penalties mention'd, and in which the King's Will and Pleasure only concerning the use of the *English* Order, Habit, and Language is declar'd) it is said indeed, "That such as do not speak *English*, or such as return to the *Irish* Language, shall be deem'd as Enemies to the King and *English* Interest: But in the Enacting Part, in which the Natives are Commanded to use their utmost Endeavour to learn to speak *English*, and to teach their Children to do so, there is not one Word prohibiting the Printing of Books in *Irish*, or Preaching in that Language; it is so far from that, that Archbishops and Bishops, &c. are allow'd to give Collation, and Institution to meer *Irishmen* where such as speak *English* cannot be had.

And that this *Statute* which was made, 1534. or the begining of (35.) was always taken in this sense, appears from hence.

The Archbishop of *Tuam* Printed the *Common-Prayer-Book* in *Irish*, *Anno Domini*, 1608.

After that Two Archbishops of *Tuam*, the Bishop of *Offory*, and *John Kearny* Treasurer of *St. Patrick's*, caused the *New Testament* to be Translated into *Irish*, and the *Province of Conaught*, and Sir *William Usber* Clerk of the Council bore the Charge of the First Edition, which is probable they would not have done, when there were so many *Papists* in the Parliament, and when *Popery* was so powerful in this Kingdom, if it had been deemed to be contrary to Law.

Bishop

Bishop Bedel also Printed some small Tracts in *Irish*, and made the *Old-Testament* to be Translated into *Irish*, before the Rebellion of *Forty One*.

And in one of the Canons of the Church of *Ireland*, made by the Convocation which Met in *Dublin*, *Anno Domini*, 1634. every Minister is required to Read part of the *Liturgy* in *Irish*, where the Half of the Congregation is *Irish*. From all which we may Observe what Opinion, the Province of *Connaught*, several Archbishops and Bishops before the Great Rebellion, and the Convocation had of the *Statute* of the 28. of *Henry* the 8th.

Mr. Boyle Printed the whole *Bible* in 1685, and prefixed a large *Preface*, address'd to his Country-men, in which among other Things there are these remarkable Words, which I shall mention here, as being very apposite to our present purpose. “ Finally, Students in Schools and Universities, who design to live by the Cure of Souls in “ *Ireland*, shall upon a serious Consideration, find it their “ precise Duty, to procure such a Knowledge of the Language of the Natives, as may enable them to help and instruct the Souls committed to their Charge, and of “ which they are to give an Account to God: For notwithstanding all the wise Statutes and Endeavours used, “ to bring this whole Nation to a Knowledge of the *English* “ Tongue, Experience shews it could not be effected; too many being unable to give such Teaching to “ their Children, or get it for themselves. And it is apparent, that in *Ireland* there are many Parishes, Baronies and whole Counties, in which the common People do understand no other Language but *Irish*.

“ This being so, how can it be presumed of any God-
 “ ly Pastor of Souls in such Places, that he will not en-
 “ deavour to procure the Spiritual Welfare of those Men,
 “ by the sweat of whose Brows he hath his Bread, Ena-
 “ bling himself to Preach and Instruct them in the Lan-
 “ guage which they best understand; that being the
 “ Way to get their Good will, and gain their Souls to God.

Wherefore if this Statute had ever been taken in such a
 strict Sense, as some are pleased now to put upon it, it may
 be presumed, that it would have long-since been Repealed,
 and that an express Law against the Gospel would not have
 remain'd so long in our Statute-Book. And whereas, so
 long as there are any Natives in *Ireland* that cannot speak
English, if it be taken so strictly, it must oblige them to
 Worship in an unknown Tongue, it is to all Intents and
 Purposes Repealed or suspended by such Statutes as abolish
*Poper*y, and Establish the *Reformed Religion in Ireland*.

An that this is the Opinion of the Present Parliament,
 appears from an Act made by them in the Eighth Year of
 Her Present Majesty's Reign, Intituled, *An Act for Ex-
 plaining and Amending an Act*, Intituled, *An Act to pre-
 vent the further Growth of Popery*. In which it is Enacted
 as followeth, without repeating the said Statute.

*And every such Convert or Converts i. e. Converted
 Priest or Priests, shall, and he or they are hereby required
 under Penalty of Forfeiting his or their Allowance or Al-
 lowances as aforesaid, publickly to Read the Common-
 Prayer, or Liturgy of the Church of Ireland, and Preach
 once a Week in the English or Irish Tongue, in such Places
 and at such Times as the said Archbishops or Bishops shall
 direct.* From which it plainly appears, that Preaching
 in

in *Irish* is so far from being contray to Law, that it is Enjoyed by an Express Act of Parliament.

III^{dly}, *To what End should all this be done, since all who can read, can read English, but not one in Five hundred can read or understand the Irish Character.*

I Answer, That such Ministers especially as labour among them, may have the necessary Books for Instructing them, and Administring the Ordinances of Religion to them in a known Tongue; and also that such few of the *Irish* as can read their own Language, may have the Use and Benefit of them. And whereas it is asserted, that the Printed *Irish* differs wholly from what is spoken, whereby it is insinuated, that the common People will not understand *Irish* Printed Books when read to them: I do solemnly Avert from my own Experience, that I have read the *Bible* and *Common-Prayer-Book* in *Irish* to the Common People both publickly and privately, and they declared they understood both very well, and that I might be satisfied they did so, I caused some of them to Translate some Sentences, which they did very well; besides, if the Case were so, Care might be taken for the future to Print the *Irish* as it is spoken.

IV^{thly}. *It is Objected that Missionaries ought to be sent to Preach in English, rather than in Irish.*

But there is no need to send Missionaries to Preach to them in *English*, because all the present Incumbents in *Ireland* can speak *English*, and so may Confer with their Popish Parishioners that can speak *English*, as often as they please: Whereas there is very great and urgent need of sending Missionaries to Preach to them in *Irish*, because few of the present *Incumbents* can Speak or Read *Irish*;

and

and Our Law is Extinguishing the Succession of the Popish Clergy : So that if we neglect to Instruct them in their own Language, Our LORD may justly take up the Complaint against us under the Gospel, which he did against the Prophets under the Law, *My people perish for lack of knowledge.*

Vthly. It is said, *That if the Natives who understand English were Converted, the others would soon follow, as being dependent upon them.*

Experience tells us otherwise. I know several *Irish* Noblemen and Gentlemen, who have Embraced the *Protestant* Religion, whose Dependents and Followers continue still to be *Papists* : Besides, What Benefit would they reap by such a Conversion as this ? What Instruction or Edification would an *Irishman* that doth not understand *English*, get by private Instruction, or the publick Offices in the *English* Tongue ? If he must come into our Assemblies, must he not worship in an unknown Tongue ? And might he not say with St. Paul, 1 Cor. 14. 11. *If I know not the meaning of the Voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh, a Barbarian, and he that speaketh, shall be a Barbarian unto me ?*

Vthly, It is said, *That Experience hath informed us, that of all the Converts that have been made, there is not an Instance of one who did not understand English.*

GOD be Praised, a considerable Number of such among the Nobility, *Popish* Clergy, and Gentry, and Commonality of *Ireland* hath been Converted to the *Protestant* Religion, but this is so far from being a real Objection against the Memorial, that it is a very strong Argument for it, because many of the *Irish* who can speak *English*, have been
turned

turned from Darkness to Light, by having an happy Opportunity of the true and proper means of Conversion, viz. by being Address'd to, and having the Offices of Religion perform'd to them in a Tongue which they understand. And I would not have any one believe, that the *Irish* who cannot speak *English* are so untractable, and Obstinate, that there is no hope of Converting them, for I have heard a whole Congregation of them express great Satisfaction, upon hearing Divine Service in their own Tongue, and thank the *Protestant* Minister who Officiated to them. And that considerable Numbers of *Irish* who cannot speak *English*, have been converted, where due Care hath been taken of them, doth evidently appear from the two following Letters.

Reverend Sir,

IN relation to what we were talking of the other Day, concerning the Necessity and Usefulness of Preaching to the *Irish* in Their own Language; I think there can nothing be a more evident Instance of it, than what I am now going to tell you from my own certain Knowledge. Soon after the late War in *Ireland*, when a great part of the Country was waste and uninhabited, several Families who could neither speak nor understand any Language but *Irish*, found their Account in coming from the Western Isles of *Scotland*, and settling in the Northern Parts of the County of *Antrim*. Upon their first coming they generally joined themselves to the Established Church of *Ireland*, but in a little time fell off to

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the

14 *in the County of Antrim to the Establis'd*

" the Church of *Rome*, and when they were asked the
 " Reason of their Change, they could give no other than
 " because they understood the *Irish* Priests, and though
 " they did not like their Religion, yet they thought
 " it better to be of that, than be of no Religion at all.
 " About Eight or Nine Years ago, a Clergyman dying
 " who held two Vicariges in that part of the Country,
 " which are called *Ramoan* and *Culefaghtrain*; the Inha-
 " bitants of the latter Petitioned the Bishop of the Dio-
 " cese to have a Minister who could Preach to them in
 " *Irish*, and recommended one Mr. *Duncan Mac Arthur*,
 " a *Highland* Gentleman, who had served the Cure du-
 " ring the late Incumbents Sickness; which Petition the
 " Bishop thought so reasonable, though irregular, that he
 " gave that Parish to Mr. *Mc. Arthur*, and *Ramoan* to me.
 " But upon my going abroad, soon after Mr. *Mc. Arthur*
 " had the Care of both the Parishes, and Preached every
 " Sunday Afternoon in *Irish*, to the great Satisfaction of
 " the Parishioners. What Progress he made in the Con-
 " version of the *Irish* I can't tell, having been out of the
 " Kingdom during the remaining part of his Life, but
 " upon his Death, one Mr. *Archibald Mc. Collum* having
 " been employed by the Bishop to take Care of those
 " Parishes, has taken such effectual pains with the *Irish*
 " and *Highlanders* of them, that by the Blessing of God
 " he has not only brought back Numbers who had fallen
 " off from our Church to that of *Rome*, but brought over
 " several who were originally *Irish Papists*, and is
 " every Day gaining upon them. And as there are
 " Numbers of these *Irish* and *Highlanders*, who under-
 " stand no *English* at all, in so much, that I have been
 " often

“ often obliged to make use of an Interpreter when I
“ talked to them, so even those who do understand it so
“ well as to converse with their Neighbours about the
“ common Concerns of Life, declare they are not capa-
“ ble of understanding so well, nor receiving that Benefit
“ from a Sermon in *English*, which they do from one in
“ *Irish*; of which the Bishop of the Diocese is so well
“ apprized, that he takes Care to provide not only those
“ I have mentioned, but several other Parishes in the
“ Neighbourhood who are in the same Circumstances,
“ with Clergymen who can Preach to the People in the
“ *Irish* Language.

“ I might add several other things which I have by hear-
“ say, to strengthen what I have told you of the Necessi-
“ tity of Preaching to the *Irish* in their own Language,
“ as particularly, that there is one *Stewart* a *Dissenting*
“ Teacher in a Neighbouring Parish, who, by Preaching
“ in *Irish*, has brought over a considerable Number of *Irish*
“ to be his hearers: This I am sure of, that there is such a Man
“ placed there, and supported by a Relation of mine, but
“ not being certain what progress he has made, I don't
“ insist upon it, being resolv'd to assert nothing, but what
“ I am very sure of, and what shall at any time be made
“ out beyond possibility of Contradiction, by the Sub-
“ scriptions of the Ministers and chief Parishioners of
“ those Parishes, and by Certificates from the Bishop and
“ Neighbouring Clergymen of that Diocese, if there be
“ any Necessity of more Authentick Testimonies to the
“ Truth of this Matter, than what can be given it by,

Reverend SIR,

Your most Obedient Servant,

May 12th, 1711.

Archd. Stewart.

SIR,

16 *Profelytes to their Party, by Preaching in Irish.*

S I R,

May 18. 1711.



S to what we discoursed at parting, the Shortness of my Time did not give me leave to acquaint you, that I had been some Tears ago employed by the Trustees for Sale of the Forfeited Estates in Ireland, on the Survey of these Forfeitures, particularly in the County of Antrim, where I met many of the Inhabitants, especially of the Barronies of Glenarm, Dunluce and Killconaway, who could not speak the English Tongue; and asking them in Irish what Religion they profess'd, they answered they were Presbyterians, upon which I asked them further, how they could understand their Minister Preaching; to that they answer'd, he always Preach'd in Irish. I had the Curiosity to go to their Meeting on the Sunday following, where I heard their Minister (whose Name I cannot remember) Preach to them in Irish, at which (though I think he did not do it well,) they express'd great Devotion: His Audience (as I understood) was composed of Native Irish and Highlanders. This, if it does you any Service to promote so good an Undertaking, I am able, and shall be always ready to testify, as also that I am,

Reverend SIR,

Your most Obedient Servant,

J. Maguire.

VIIIthly, It is Objected, That keeping up a difference in Language, will keep up a difference in Religion; so that by Preaching in Irish, we shall rather confirm the Natives in Popery, than convert them to the Protestant Religion.

I Answer, that the different manner of communicating our Thoughts of any Thing to others, doth neither alter the Nature of the Thing, nor our Thoughts and Notions of it : Otherwise different Languages would be the Causes of Mens having different Conceptions of other Things, as well as of Religion ; whereas altho' there be great variety of Languages in the World, yet we have reason to believe, that all Men agree in their Apprehensions and Conceptions of many Things ; and on the other side we find, that Men speaking the same Language, have different Thoughts of the same Thing. Wherefore since a Language hath no operation upon the Nature of a Thing, or of our Notions and Apprehensions of it, it plainly follows, that diversity of Religion in the World, doth not proceed from the different way of speaking which Men use, (for then God would have brought a great Multitude of Religions into the World, by the Multiplication of Languages at *Babel*) but from their different Educations, Tempers, and Constitutions, or from the various Abilities and Capacities of their Minds, or sometimes from their different views and Interests.

2. If difference in Language keeps up difference in Religion, our Blessed Saviour (who hath enjoined Unity of Religion as earnestly, and as frequently as any other Duty) would not have commanded, and by his Holy Spirit Impowered, the Apostles to *Preach the Gospel* in different Languages : He would have abolished all Languages but one, otherwise, if this *Objection* holds good, his Command of Unity in Religion had been impracticable.

3. This *Objection* is sufficiently Confuted by the Experience of all Ages. But to go no higher than the Christi-

an *Era*. We find that although the *Primitive* Christians spoke different Languages, yet they were very unanimous in their Religion, *Acts. 2. 44, 45, 46. All that believed were together, and had all things common, and Sold their Possessions and Goods, and parted them to all Men, as every Man had need. And they continuing daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking Bread from House to House, did eat their Meat with Gladness and Singleness of Heart.* I might quote many Instances among the *Mahometan, Popish* and *Protestant* Countries on the Continent, to prove that different Languages do not produce different Religions: But I shall content my self, and I believe, every Impartial Reader will also be fully contented with Three or Four in *Great Britain and Ireland*. The *English, Welsh* and *Cornish* Tongues in *England* do not produce diversity of Religion, among the People who speak them. So in *Scotland* the *Highlanders* and *Saxons* are for the most part of the same Religion, notwithstanding that their Speech is not the same. On the other hand, Agreement in Language doth not prevent diversity of Religion: How many Sectaries are there in these Kingdoms who speak no other Language but the *English*? Have we not *English Papists* and *Irish Protestants, Irish Papists* and *English Protestants*? From what hath been said to this Objection, it appears that the Conclusion drawn from these Premises is very inconclusive, viz. *That by Preaching in Irish, we shall rather confirm the Natives in Popery, than convert them to the Protestant Religion*; which is as if one should say, by letting in the Light to a Man who is in the dark, you shall rather keep him still in the dark, than give him an opportunity of seeing. That by Preaching the Truth to a Man, you shall confirm him.

him in his Errors. That by Praying in a known Tongue, you shall induce him to go on in Praying in an unknown Tongue; and that by worshipping **GOD** alone, you shall keep him upon his Knees to the Virgin *Mary*, or some other Saint or Angel.

Besides, If by *Preaching in Irish*, you shall rather confirm an Irishman in Popery, than Convert him to the Protestant Religion, It necessarily follows, that it is impossible to Convert an *Irishman*, because if you cannot do it by conveying the Truth and Light of the Gospel to him by the means of a Language which he doth understand, you cannot do it by means of a Language which he doth not understand: But Experience shews, that an *Irishman* may be Converted by Preaching in *Irish*, instead of being confirmed in *Popery*, which is another Instance of the invalidity of this *Objection*.

IX. If it should be Objected, That *these Missionaries may at pleasure Preach to the Irish*, Popery, Fanaticism, or Sedition it self.

I Answer, That by the Excellent Constitution of Our Church, the Bishops have not only a Power given to satisfy Themselves, but also have an Opportunity to give the People all the Satisfaction that can be expected of the Soundness and Orthodoxy of their Ministers, when they are Ordained, or Admitted to any Cure.

For, 1st, At Ordination every Minister solemnly vows to Preach sound Doctrine to the People. 2. In the 3^d Canon of our Church, it is Ordered, That no Person shall be receiv'd into the Ministry, or admitted to any Ecclesiastical Living, nor permitted to Preach, Read, Lecture, Catechise, or Minister the Sacraments, except he shall first
by

20 *from preaching Heresy, Popery, Fanaticism, &c.*

by Subscription declare his Consent to the First Four Canons of our Church, in the First of which he declares his Approbation of the 39 Articles, and in the Third his Assent to the Liturgy of our Church. 3. Our Liturgy, (to the Use of which every Minister is confined in the publick Worship of God,) is also a very effectual Means to prevent the Minister from corrupting the People with Heresy; For he is obliged to make a Confession of his Faith, in Conjunction with the People, according to those Forms of sound Words set down in the CREEDS, commonly called, the *Apostolical, Nicene, and Athanasian*; so that he cannot Preach or spread any Tenet contrary to any of these Fundamental Articles of Faith, without Renouncing his Creed, whereof he constantly makes a Profession at every publick Worship of God. In the *Liturgy* also, not only the Fundamental Articles of Faith, but also the necessary Points of Practice, and many useful and edifying Truths are mention'd, by which means the People have the Advantage of being Instructed in them, and the Minister also is bound up from varying from them. 4. It is Enacted in our Law, that *severe Penalties shall be inflicted upon any Minister who shall Teach or Maintain any thing contrary to the Form of sound Doctrine, contained in our Liturgy and Articles.*

I do not see how better Rules could have been made, or more effectual Methods can be used to keep the Clergy within the bounds of the *Christian Faith*, and of preserving the Doctrine of the Gospel pure and uncorrupted in the Church of Christ; and the Missionaries being subject to these Rules and Methods, and being accountable to the respective Bishops for departing from them, as well as any other

other Clergymen, I do not understand how they may at their Pleasure Preach Popery, Fanaticism, or Sedition.

X. It is said, That to Print Books in Irish, and to send Missionaries to Preach in that Tongue, is to give too much Encouragement to the Language.

But this being the only way to Convert such of the Natives as do not understand *English*, we are indispensibly bound to make this Use of the Language, out of Charity to their Souls, and in Obedience to our Saviours express Command. And although I should not be for encouraging the Language, any farther than is necessary to promote the Conversion of the *Irish*, and the Salvation of their Souls; yet it being evident that difference in a Language doth not keep up difference in Religion, and that it is not the *Irish* Language, but the *Popish* Religion, that is repugnant to the *English* Interest, I cannot perceive any harm even in Point of Policy in using it. For diversity of Languages is not hurtful in other Countries, nay the *Irish* Language it self, is a harmless thing in *Scotland*, and hath not any Marks of the Beast upon it.

And after all, I do not question, but to make this Use of the Language at present, is the most effectual way to diminish the Use of it hereafter: For if we prevail with them to conform to our Church, their Prejudices being thereby in a great Measure removed, they will more readily fall in with our Customs and Language, and being qualified equally with ourselves for any Office or Employment, their Interest will soon induce them to speak *English*.

XI. It is Objected, That the best way to Convert the *Irish*, is to abolish their Language, according to the wise Design of our Ancestors nigh 200 Years ago.

I Answer, That after the Experience of near 200 Years, we find very little or no Progress made in this Design, they still retain their Language and their Religion too: Nay the *Irish* Language is so far from being abolish'd, that as many *British* proportionably speak *Irish*, as Natives speak *English*. I should be well pleased, that there were but one Language commonly used in the Kingdom, and that it were the *English* Language. But Multiplicity of Languages being brought into the World by God himself, for wise Ends and Purposes without doubt, I believe it will be found to be a very difficult, if not impracticable Attempt to abolish a Language, at least suddenly and by Compulsion; It hath never been practised in the World, so far as I can learn; I have heard of Languages that have been corrupted, and that have multiplied by a Mixture with other Languages, but I never heard of one totally abolish'd; And any one who proposes it, would do well to shew a Scheme how it may be done. The shortest and most effectual way is to hinder them to speak, for every Nation and People being fond and tenacious of their own Language, unless we hinder them to speak, they will speak their own Language, and teach it to their Children. But if this Method be not liked, before we abolish their Language, we must teach them ours; And can this be done to a whole Nation at once, or even in an Age? How shall we be able to teach a Multitude of People to speak *English*, who have nothing under Providence to depend upon, for the Subsistence of themselves and their Families, but their own Industry and daily Labour. Wherefore if abolishing their Language be a Work that will require some length of time to accomplish it, what shall be-
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come of these poor Souls in the mean time? Or rather, what shall become of us for neglecting them? Besides an open and avowed Endeavour to abolish their Language, will very much hinder their Conversion, It will provoke and exasperate them to the highest degree, and so render them more averse to our Religion; Wherefore it is humbly conceived, that the Methods here proposed, are the most likely, not only to convert them, but also to bring their Language into Disuse; For by Instructing them in their own Language, we shall gain their Affections, and thereby get an Opportunity of drawing them into a good liking of the *English* Customs, Religion, and Language: And by Teaching their Children to read *English*, the *English* Tongue will be more and more used, and the *Irish* more and more disused among them.

XII. Objection. *The Natives will not come to hear us.* I Answer,

That if we must not endeavour to Convert them, because of an apprehension that they will not come to hear us, for the same Reason we must never attempt it, because their Education giving them Prepossessions in favour of their own Religion, and in prejudice of ours; we may always be apprehensive, that they will not be very fond of coming to hear us at first.

But are we sure, without making tryal, that they will not come to hear us? How do we know but their curiosity, or a desire to hear Performances in their own Language, may move them to come to hear us? Or, shall we neglect an express Duty, because it may happen that we shall perform it in vain? Ought we not rather do our Duty, and leave the success to God?

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If they will not come to us, we should go to them, according to the good Example of our Blessed Saviour, and his Apostles, who went about doing Good; who visited from House to House; who resorted to the Temple, to the Synagogues, and to the other places of Concourse, that they might have an opportunity of *preaching the glad tidings of Salvation* to the people. If we did but duly consider the Worth and the danger of Souls, we should be easily induced to do the like, and we should not endure to see poor ignorant Wretches ready to stumble at every step *into the pit of Destruction*, and not think it our Concernment, to endeavour to convince them of their Danger, and shew them how to avoid it.

The Prophets under the Law were often sent to a *Rebellious and Stiff-necked People*, and were commanded to Preach to them, *whether they would hear, or whether they would forbear*: Our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles offered the *means of Salvation*, to those, who they knew, would reject them. Wherefore, we who are Sinners ourselves, and stand in so much need of God's Mercy, and are so much obliged to him for *his Patience and Long-suffering*, should not think much to wait long, to make many tryals, and to use frequent and repeated Endeavours to reclaim others.

Besides all this, some who make the Experiment, find that *they do come to our Service performed in their own Tongue*; Many of them have come, notwithstanding that their Priests Curse them, and threaten to Excommunicate them for it, and some of their Hearts have been opened, as *Lydia's was, to receive the Truth*, and *they have been Converted*.

XIII. Others Object, *That the Endeavours of some to Convert the Irish, have not succeeded. Such a Minister laboured in vain in such a Place, and another in another Place.*

I Answer, That if Christ and his Apostles had left off *Preaching the Gospel*, because they succeeded not in some Places, *the Light of the Gospel* had never reached us. But if *some have laboured in vain* in one part of the Vineyard, others have succeeded in another part of it: And one would think, that this were sufficient Encouragement, even to the faint hearted and the lazy to set about this Work.

The Reason, why the Conversion of the *Irish* hath been fruitless and ineffectual in many parts of the Kingdom, is, because it was never made a constant and general Work throughout the Kingdom. The United Endeavours of the Clergy and Laity, have not been employed against the Unanimous Opposition of the *Popish* Natives; Attempts were made to convert them only now and then, here and there, by a single Bishop or private Clergyman, and they were baffled and discouraged by Difficulties and Obstructions thrown into their way, not only by those of the Church of *Rome*, but by many of our own Communion. Let us therefore try what a constant and universal Attempt throughout the Kingdom will do, let us use all fit means, and set all Hands to work, and if the Event should not Answer our Expectation, we may however comfort our selves with the Thoughts of having done our Duty, and of *being pure from the Blood of all Men*, Acts. 20. 26.

Upon the whole, it plainly appears, that the Objections against the *Irish* Language, have not any Foundation

26 *The Objections are grounded on National Prejudice.*

either in Reason or Religion: And it is obvious to observe, that they are grounded altogether upon that National Prejudice and Aversion which still remains among too many of the *English* and *Irish* Nations to one another. I know some of the Natives of this Kingdom, who can speak *English*, and yet will not, for no other Reason but because it is *English*. The same Motive on the other side, induces some to be very earnest for abolishing the *Irish* Language: They have a Dislike to the Nation, and this unaccountably breeds a Dislike to the Language, for which no other Reason can be given, but that it is *Irish*; If this were not so, there would be the same Necessity for abolishing the *Irish* Language in *Scotland*. But this is not the Way to Unite the Two Nations in their Hearts and Affections: Difference of Religion is that which sets them at the greatest distance from one another, and if that were taken away, all other Differences would dwindle into nothing, or if they continued, they would do no harm. And from what hath been said, it appears, that Preaching and Printing the *Bible* and *Common-Prayer-Book* in *Irish*, are the necessary Means for attaining this good End.

But it may be said, *That such Ministers as shall be Employed to perform the Offices of Religion to the Natives in their own Language, may Translate the Bible and Common-Prayer-Book Extempore while they are Officiating, and that there will be no need of Printing them, by which Means the Propagation of the Language will be prevented.*

Enough hath been said already, to prove that we need be under no Apprehensions from the Language. But however, an *extemporary* Version of the *Scripture* and *Liturgy* delivered to the People, hath as great a tendency to keep up

up the Use of the Language among them, as the reading of a Printed one.

Then, their Translations be they right or wrong, must pass for Scripture among the common People; by which Means they shall have an Opportunity indeed of Preaching *Popery, Fanaticism* or *Sedition* it self, (which is made a great Objection to the sending of Missionaries among them.) But surely, after a serious Consideration of this Matter, any one who has a just regard for the Divine Authority of the Scripture, and a due concern for the sound and wholesome Instruction of the People, would not approve of such a dangerous Method, if it were Practicable, as it is not, for the *Irish* Language is so barren and defective, that it is not in the Power of the most skillful in it, to Translate any other Language into *Irish*, without Study and Premeditation.

I proceed to the Fourth Article, *Viz.*

That a sufficient Number of Charity-Schools be Erected for the Instruction of the Irish Children gratis, in the English Tongue; and the Establish'd Church, and that, &c.

This Article is grounded upon the great Usefulness of Religious Education in general, and upon the many Advantages in particular, which the Publick will receive by having these Children instructed in the Church Catechism.

It is proposed that they be taught to read, not only that they may be more fit for Business, but especially, that they may be more capable of Catechetical Instruction, and improving in Christian Knowledge, which very few illiterate Persons attain to, in any tolerable Measure or Degree.

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28 *The great Usefulness of Charity-Schools.*

Now by the help of these Schools great Numbers of Children will be bred up in the Knowledge of Vertue and Religion, who would otherwise be not only abandoned to utter Darkness and Ignorance, but would also be trained up, as it is too much to be feared, in a vicious and dissolute Course of Life.

Their young and tender Minds will be early acquainted with the Fear of God, and with the Practice of Piety, and this in all Probability will have a mighty Influence upon their behaviour and Conversation, while they live in this World, according to the Divine Saying, *Prov, 22. 6. Train up a Child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.* And there is not any Means more effectual for attaining this End, than to Instruct them in our Church Catechism, which is in all respects excellently fitted to the Institution of Children and Beginners in Religion.

For our Catechism is written in the most easie and familiar Style, all hard and obscure Expressions being on Purpose avoided, that the lowest Capacities may be Instructed by it.

As to the Matter of it, it doth not consist of abstruse and difficult Doctrines, that may Exercise the Wits of the ablest Divines, but it is wholly made up of the uncontradicted Points of Religion, which may be easily understood, and apprehended right without danger of Mistake.

This Catechism is also Short, and may be readily learned: All superfluous and unnecessary Things, which are a Burden to the Minds of young and weak People, are avoided, and the Fundamentals of Religion are comprized in so small a Compass, that they may be committed to the Memory with very little Trouble. And

The great usefulness of Charity Schools. 29

And that which Grows all is, that it is compleat and sufficient to inform the Mind with saving Knowledge, and is wanting and deficient in nothing that is absolutely requisite to be known in order to Eternal Salvation; so that whosoever shall thoroughly understand the Church Catechism, shall be sufficiently instructed to Everlasting Life.

By this means also the whole Community will reap many Benefits. For hereby these poor misguided Children will have wholesome and substantial Nourishment Administred to their Souls, instead of the corrupt and Superstitious Principles and Doctrines of the Church of Rome. They will be taught to make the weightier Matters of the Law, their greatest Care and Concernment. The difference between Good and Evil, between Things Lawful and Unlawful, Necessary and Indifferent, will be sufficiently Imprinted on their Minds, and this will prevent them from being Scrupulous and Superstitious, and will make them easie in their Religion, and in their Conversation, both to themselves and others. And hereby they will be taught to be useful and orderly Members both in Church and State, by submitting themselves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's Sake, and by preserving the Peace and Unity of the Church, and the Quiet and Tranquillity of the Kingdom. It is also worthy of our Consideration, that by this means a great Number of Children will be brought up in the Establish'd Religion, who must otherwise be filled from their Infancy with the greatest Aversion and Prejudice to it; especially if the Benefit of these Schools be extended to poor Protestant Children, whose Parents cannot give them useful and Religious Education.

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And

30 *The great usefulness of Charity Schools.*

And it is to be presumed, that it will not be of any dangerous Consequence to the Common Wealth, to Teach so many *Irish* Boys to Read and Write, if they were to be Instructed in Military Discipline, and Weapons put into their Hands instead of Primers and Catechisms, this might give some Umbrage, but it is hoped, that Reading and Writing only, will not make them capable of doing mischief to the Publick: It is probable, that the good Principles which by this means will be taught them, will have better Influence upon them, and will, by the Grace of God, make them better Subject and better Christians, and more useful in their Generation, than otherwise they would be. It is certain, that Religious Education hath not only this natural Tendency, but also the Divine Promise that it shall be generally followed with good Effects.

Moreover, These Schools may be so ordered, that Children may be prevented from learning a habit of Idleness at them; they may be Instructed, before they can bring any considerable Benefit to their Parents by their Labour; and if they continue longer, they may be allowed to assist their Parents in Harvest, and upon other necessary Occasions, and be thereby accustomed to Work. But Experience will best satisfy us in this Point. The People of *England* and of the Northern Parts of *Scotland*, are for the most part taught to Read and Write, and they are nevertheless both very industrious People; and it is well known from the Trial of several Years, that Charity-Schools have done much good in *England*.

But the most weighty Objection against these Schools, is, That it is to be feared that the Parents of these Children may pervert them again, and bring them back to the Popish

Popish Religion. And it is probable, that some of them, if they be left to their own Liberty, may do so, but it is as probable, that others will not; for I know many Instances, where the Natives give up their Children to be Educated in the *Protestant Religion*, and permit them to continue in it; for the *Popish Religion* lies now under great Discouragements, and is losing ground in many parts of this Kingdom, *Praying in an unknown Tongue* is generally disliked in some Places that I know, many of that Communion are not satisfied with their Priests for being deprived of the Use of the Scriptures, and do not believe *Transubstantiation*, there are great Numbers of them whose Affections to *Popery* are much cooled and abated, and these in all Probability will suffer their Children to adhere to the *Protestant Religion*, considering withal the Temporal Advantages that may accrew to them thereby.

Wherefore although it may happen, that some of these Children may return to the Church of *Rome*, yet these Schools are worthy of *Publick Encouragement* for the sake of others who will, as it may be hoped, continue to be *Protestants*, by the *Connivance of their Parents*, and by *virtue of the good Principles instilled into them*. But notwithstanding what hath been said, it will be worthy of the *Publick Consideration*, to prevent any Inconvenience this way, by obliging the Parents that their Children brought up at these Schools shall go to Church while they are under their immediate Care, *under the Penalty of paying for their Education*, or by any other expedient means whereby they may be hindered from turning *Papists*.

I come now to shew the Reasons upon which the Sixth Article is grounded.

It must be acknowledged, that if all those, who call themselves Christians, were of the same Disposition with St. Paul, who did not seek his own Profit, but the Profit of many, that they might be saved, 1 Cor. 10. 33. If they were as publick Spirited, and as Zealous in propagating the common Christianity, and in promoting the Universal Happiness and Welfare of Mankind, as Christians are obliged to be; True Religion would spread much faster in the World than it doth: *The Kingdom of Darkness would soon be subdued, and the Kingdom of our Blessed Saviour would be set up and Established in all parts of the Earth;* and there would be little or no need of Incorporating a Society for propagating the Reformed Religion in Ireland: For every one would do his Part in so good a Work, without being induced to it by any special Motive, or particular Obligation.

But it is a sad Truth, that the greatest part of those who profess the Christian Religion, are very cold and indifferent in this Matter, and shew no more Concern for advancing the Glory of God, and the Salvation of Souls, than if they were not at all obliged to do it.

Even those who have made some Attainments in Religion are apt to be somewhat remiss in the Discharge of his Duty: It is a Duty incumbent upon every one, and therefore they hope that others will take the Trouble of it upon them. For which Reason, it is generally observ'd, *That what is every ones Business, is seldom made the Object of any ones Care or Concern.*

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Wherefore for the better Discharge of Duties of this Nature which lie upon Christians at large, it is by Experience found requisite, that they be committed to the particular Care of some Persons, who may upon that Account, think themselves more immediately concern'd to see them accomplished.

And this is more especially necessary to secure and facilitate the Performance of these Duties, when they are like to be encumbered with great Charge and Expence, or to be obstructed by much Opposition and Discouragement; as the Conversion of the *Irish* is more than likely to be. For,

1. As to the Charge and Expence; It will be necessary (as hath been already observed) that a Competent Number of Ministers be Provided and Encouraged by a suitable Maintenance to Instruct the Natives, and to perform the Offices of Religion to them in their own Language; And in order to this, these Ministers must be supplied with *Bibles* and *Common Prayer-Books* at least. And for the more effectual accomplishing this good Work, it will be requisite that Charity-Schools be Erected to Teach their Children to Read and Write *English*, and to Instruct them in the true Principles of Religion. Wherefore, to defray this Expence, it is Presumed, that an Incorporated Society capable of Collecting the *Publick and Private Charity* of the Queen's Subjects, of receiving Legacies and making Purchases, will be very useful if not necessary.

2. It cannot be expected, but that this Work will meet with many other Difficulties and Obstructions. When any Design is set on Foot, which hath a more than ordinary Tendency to promote the Glory of God, and the

Salvation of Men; then the Adversary of Souls will not fail to use all his Endeavours to baffle and Defeat it. The *Romish* Priests will undoubtedly give it all the Opposition that they can; and such of the *Papish* Nobility and Gentry as have lost their Estates, and have not any Prospect of recovering them, but by a *Foreign Power*, will leave nothing undone which may hinder the Conversion of the *Irish*; and the many Sects and Parties among us, who are not desirous that any additional Strength should be brought to the Church, will find out ways and means of discouraging it.

Wherefore it is humbly conceived, that an Incorporated Society of such as are well disposed to this Work, will be very useful and helping towards overcoming all those Difficulties. For the Conversion of the *Irish* being the profess'd Design and Business of the Society, it may be expected, that they will take better Care of it, and promote it more effectually, than if it were left altogether to the Discretion of every single Person. Besides an united Body of Men acting in Concert, will have greater Power and Influence, than the same Persons acting separately can have.

And if a competent Number of the Nobility and Gentry were received into this Society, the Countenance and Assistance of the Laity being thereby added to the Labours and Endeavours of the Clergy, such an United Society would have greater Capacities of forwarding this Work, than can otherwise be well expected.

For the Nobility and Gentry engaged in this Corporation, would in all probability befriended their own Undertaking in both Houses of Parliament, and upon all other

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Occasions. They would be capable of removing many of the Difficulties and Hindrances that it may meet with throughout the Kingdom. It would be much in their Power to promote it among their Neighbours and Tenants. And they could be very useful and assisting in obtaining the Charity of others, and in contributing to it themselves; and without such Help and such Concurrence of the *Laiety*, so laborious, so difficult, and so expensive an Undertaking is likely to go on, and to be accomplished but very slowly.

We may be fully convinced of this, from the Experience of a Neighbouring Kingdom; the great Progress which the Christian Religion hath lately made in the *East* and *West Indies*, by God's Blessing, upon the remarkable Zeal and Piety of the Society for propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, shews us plainly how useful such a Society might be in this Kingdom.

And the joining of some of the *Laiety* to the Clergy in this Society, need not give any Umbrage, as if any Encroachment were to be made thereby upon the Rights of the Clergy; for by being a Member of such a Society, a Layman doth not acquire any Power, Authority or Jurisdiction, that is proper and peculiar to the Clergy: He is called upon only to give his Advice and Assistance, his Countenance and Encouragement to this good Work. And in the Charter (as in all other Charters) it may be Provided, that the Society shall not make any By-Laws, Statutes, or Ordinances, repugnant to the Laws and Statutes of the Realm, whereby the Rights and Priviledges of the Clergy may be fully secured to them, and such a Society effectually prevented from Invading them.

Thus

Thus I have Endeavour'd to shew the Grounds upon which the Methods Propos'd for the Conversion of the Irish, are built, and to Answer the Objections made to them.

Before I conclude this Argument, I reckon my self oblig'd to offer something further to the Consideration of those, who are against publishing the Scriptures and Liturgy in *Irish*, because it seem'd to me to be a Matter of great Moment and Importance, and very much affecting the Honour and Reputation of both our Church and Nation.

It can be very easily prov'd, that to hinder the Scriptures from being published in *Irish*, is, to deprive such of the Natives, as understand that Language only, of a Right which God hath given them; that it is to take away the Means of Salvation from them; that it is to do that for which we severely Censure the Church of Rome, and for which we justly separate from her; And that it will render their Conversion Impracticable.

I am verily perswaded, that this Matter hath not been fully consider'd, and that after a serious Reflection upon it, every one who believeth the Divine Authority of the Scriptures, and considers how useful and necessary the Knowledge of them is to the Salvation of Men's Souls, will not be against publishing them in the *Irish* Tongue. Wherefore, I know not, how I can do better Service, or how I can make a more thankful Return, to those for whom I am oblig'd in points of Duty and Gratitude, to have the greatest Honour and Esteem, than by setting it in a clear Light before them. In order to which, these following Considerations are with all Sincerity and Respect, submitted to the pious Thoughts and Meditations of the Christian Reader.

1. The End of any Writing is that it may be Read; And the Design of any one who Writes to another, must surely be that he peruse the Writing which he directs to him. Wherefore, it having pleased the most Gracious and Merciful God, out of his Infinite Love and Favour to Mankind, to direct the Revelation of his Will to all Men without Exception, and without Respect of Persons or Nations, to all who every where call on the Name of the Lord Jesus, and consequently to the *Irish* as well as the *English*, or any other People, to hinder the publishing of the Scriptures in *Irish*, is to deprive such of the Natives as understand that Language only, of the use and benefit of that which God hath not only allow'd them, but expressly directed to them.

Nay God Almighty having not only directed his Word to all Men, but also commanded all Men to search it; as it argues great contempt and disregard of the Divine Majesty, in any one, not to read what God hath directed to him, and what he hath Commanded him to Read : So for any Man or Society of Men, to debarr others of the free use of that, which God hath not only allow'd, but commanded them to use, is both to deprive them of a Right and Privilege which God hath given them, and also to acquit them of a Duty which he hath laid upon them.

2. To hinder the publishing of the Bible in *Irish*, is to deprive the Natives of one of the principal Means of Salvation.

The Word of God is a Light unto our Feet, and a Lamp to our Paths; the Scriptures are able to make us Wise unto Salvation, all things necessary to Eternal Life being

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plainly delivered to us therein; therefore all Men should have the free use of them, because Eternal Salvation being a Matter of the greatest Moment and Concernment, all Methods should be used, and no Means either prohibited or neglected of obtaining it.

Besides, the Scriptures being the Word of God himself, as we cannot but be therefore firmly perswaded of the Truth of them, so they cannot but have the strongest Influence and Operation upon our Hearts and Actions; the Word of God himself being much more to be regarded, than the Word or Writing of any Man, as having infinitely greater Advantages to recommend it self to us, than any Humane Composition.

To this it may be added, that not only from the Scriptures themselves, but also from Experience, we have good Grounds to believe that God Almighty enforces and sets home his Word upon the Minds and Consciences of Men, and blesteth the due use of it, with the Concurrence of his Holy Spirit, much more to be sure, than the Works or Writings of any Mortal Man.

Wherefore, the use of the Scriptures hath been always esteemed by the *Catholick Church*, among the indispensable Ordinances of Religion, and the necessary means of Salvation. For which we have sufficient Authority in Scripture, where we are said to be *Regenerated by the Word of God*, 1 Pet. 1. 23: where we are taught, that it doth *convert the Soul*, that it giveth *Wisdom to the Simple*, that it *rejoiceth the Heart*, and giveth *Light unto the Eyes*, Psal. 119. 7, 8. where it is declared to be the *Engrafted Word*, which is able to *save our Souls*, Jam. 1. 18.

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And for confirmation of this, I may appeal to the Testimony of every Good Christian. As for such as have not the Love and Fear of God in their Hearts, they have no sense, no knowledge of this Matter, for *the Natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. But every sincere Christian knows full well, that the Word of God is Quick and Powerful, and that it hath the greatest force and efficacy upon him in all the Cases and Circumstances of his Life, and that *it worketh effectually in them that believe*, 1 Thes. 2. 13.

Wherefore as we ought most thankfully to acknowledge the unspeakable Happiness of having the Scriptures in our own Language; so we ought not only to allow, but also to promote and encourage the free use of it to all other Men, that so they may be saved thereby as well as we.

3. This is a Practice for which we justly condemn the Church of Rome.

It is the avowed Doctrine and Principle of all the Reformed Churches, that all Men have a Right to search the Scriptures, and that in order thereunto they should be Translated into all Languages, *that every Tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father*, Phil. 2. 11. and that the Everlasting Gospel might be Preach'd unto them that dwell on the Earth, and to every Nation, and Kindred, and Tongue, and People, Rev. 14. 6. And for denying the People this Liberty, the Church of Rome is charged by the Protestant Divines, with being guilty of Sacrilege, and of great Cruelty to the Souls of Men. I might fill up a great Volume of Quotations to this purpose, but I shall trouble the Reader only with Atch-Bishop Tillotson's Judgment and Censure of this Practice.

Etice; Vol. fol. p. 351, 352. I observe the great and inexcusable Fault of those who keep Men in Ignorance of Religion, and take away from them so excellent and necessary a means of Divine Knowledge as the Holy Scriptures are. This our Saviour calls taking away the Key of Knowledge, and shutting the Kingdom of Heaven against Men. That is, doing what in them lies to render it impossible for Men to be saved. For this he denounceth a terrible Woe against the Teachers of the Jewish Church: Though they did not proceed so far as to deprive Men of the Use of the Holy Scriptures, but only of the right Knowledge and Understanding of them. This alone is a horrible Impiety, to lead Men into a false Sense and Interpretation of Scripture, but much greater to forbid them the Reading of it. This is to stop Knowledge at the very Fountain-head; and not only to lead Men into Error, but to take away from them all possibility of rectifying their Mistakes. And can there be a greater Sacrilege, than to rob Men of the Word of God, the best means in the World of acquainting them with the Will of God, and their Duty, and the way to Eternal Happiness? To keep the People in Ignorance of that which is necessary to save them, is to Judge them unworthy of Eternal Life, and to Declare it does not belong to them, and maliciously to contrive the Eternal Ruin and Destruction of their Souls.

To lock up the Scriptures and the Service of God from the People in an unknown Tongue, what is this but in effect to forbid Men to know God, and to serve him; to render them incapable of knowing what is the good and acceptable Will of God; of joining in his Worship, or performing any part of it, or receiving any Benefit or Edification from it? And what is, if this be not, to shut the Kingdom of Heaven against Men?

for which we condemn the Church of Rome. 41

Men? This is so outrageous a Cruelty to the Souls of Men. that it is not to be excused upon any pretence whatsoever. This is to take the surest and most effectual way in the World to destroy those for whom Christ Died, and directly to thwart the great design of God our Saviour, who wou'd have all Men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the Truth. Men may miscarry with their Knowledge, but they are sure to perish for want of it, p. 351.

With great reason then does our Saviour denounce so heavy a woe against such Teachers. Of old in the like case, God by his Prophet severely threatens the Priests of the Jewish Church, for not instructing the People in the knowledge of God, Hos. 4. 6. My People are destroyed for lack of Knowledge: Because thou hast rejected Knowledge, I will also reject thee; thou shalt be no more a Priest to me: Seeing thou hast forgotten the Law of thy God, I will also forget thy Children. God, you see, lays the ruin of so many Souls at their doors, and will require their Blood at their Hands. So many as perish for want of Knowledge, and eternally miscarry by being deprived of the necessary means of Salvation, their destruction shall be charged upon those who have taken away the Key of Knowledge, and shut the Kingdom of Heaven against Men.

And it is just with God to punish such Persons, not only as the Occasion, but as the Authors of their Ruin. For who can judge otherwise, but that they who deprive Men of the necessary means to any End, do purposely design to hinder them of attaining that End? And whatever may be pretended in this Case; to deprive Men of the Holy Scriptures, and to keep them ignorant of the Service of God, and yet while they do so, to make a shew of an earnest Desire
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42 Without the free use of the Scriptures in their own language, of their Salvation, is just such a Mockery, as if one of you that is a Master should tell his Prentice, how much you desire he should thrive in the World, and be a rich Man, but all the while keep him ignorant in his Trade, in order to his being rich; and with the strictest Care imaginable conceal from him the best means of Learning that, whereby alone he is likely to thrive, and get an Estate.

These are severe Truths, and they fall heavily upon the Church of Rome, but much more heavily upon such Protestants, as would deprive a Nation of the free use of the Scriptures; because it is contrary to their own Principles, and is a corrupt Practice, for which, among others, they have separated from the Church of Rome. And let not any one think, to avoid the force of this Argument, by saying, That such of the Natives as can read, can read *English*, and that if they be so disposed, they may freely read the Scriptures in the *English* Tongue. Because there are some of the Natives (although the Number be but very small) who can read *Irish*, and yet do understand and can read no other Language: Besides, the Scriptures should be published in *Irish*, for the Use and Benefit of the great Multitude of them, who do not understand *English*. For a Man is not acquitted from searching the Scriptures, and consulting the Mind and Will of God therein concerning his Duty and Happiness, because he cannot read: But he ought to get others to read the Word of God to him, and he should frequent the publick Worship where it is constantly read, and the Pastors of Christ's Church to whose Care the Souls of the People are committed, are bound to read it to them. And how this can be done, without Publishing the Scriptures in *Irish*, I cannot tell.

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It might be expected, that every one who has the Conversion of the *Irish* at heart, should Incline to try this Method, from the Success which it had in former times, whereof Sir *James Ware* gives an Instance in his *Annals of Ireland*, in the following Words. *Anno Domini 1571. & Anno Reginae (viz. Elizabethæ) 13.* “ This Year the “ *Irish* Characters for Printing were first brought into this “ Kingdom, by *Nicholas VValsb* Chancellor of St. *Patrick* in *Dublin*, and *John Kerne* Treasurer of the same, “ And it was Ordered that the Prayers of the Church “ should be Printed in that Character and Language, and “ a Church set apart in the chief Town of every Diocese, where they were to be read, and a Sermon Preached to the Common People, which was Instrumental to convert many of the Ignorant sort in those Days.

Lastly, The Conversion of the *Irish* is not practicable, if we will not allow them the free use of the Scriptures in their own Language.

If we would treat the Popish Natives, as Christians ought to deal with one another : The fair and honest, the proper and effectual way to Convert them, is to convince them, that their corrupt Principles and Practices are directly repugnant and contrary to the Will of God revealed to us in His Holy Word. But if we will not permit them to have the use of this Book in their own Language, how can we in Reason and Modesty appeal to it for the Determination of our Differences in Religion? May not an Irishman justly Answer? This Book is prohibited to me, it is lockt up in an Unknown Tongue, I must not Judge for my self, wherefore, I hope you will excuse me, if I do not quit a Religion that I have been bred up in, for

44 *The Gospel means, the only means of Converting 'em.*
for one that I must take upon Trust. Besides, if the Scripture and Liturgy must not be publish'd in *Irish*, we cannot Perform the Offices of Religion to them in their own Language.

Upon the whole, if we would bring the *Papish* Natives, to a sincere Profession of the true Religion, the Gospel-Means must be used to that End. Other Methods have been tried in vain; sometimes Severities have been inflicted, but this way hath not succeeded with them, and hath never been successful in propagating the Truth. Other times, they have been neglected, and left to their own Delusions, and our Nation hath often been punished in kind for these things, by feeling the cruel and barbarous Effects of those Tenets and Principles, from which they neglected to convert the Natives. One would think that the Remembrance of those horrid Tragedies, which the *Papish* Religion hath acted in this Kingdom, were enough to warn and excite us, to prevent the like for the future, least that an offended God should once more use them as Rods to chastise us, for neglecting a Duty which the Gospel of Christ, Charity to the Souls of Men, and our own Interest both Temporal and Eternal, do oblige us not to neglect. Let the Wisdom of this World therefore be for once laid aside, and let us try how the plain and honest, the mild and gentle Methods of the Gospel will succeed, which as they are most agreeable to the Frame and Constitution of humane Nature, so they have the best Claim and Title to God's Blessing, without which all humane Endeavours will come to nothing.

This is a Work, which ought (and I hope will) some time or other, sooner or later, be heartily set about; and there

The Conversion of the Irish very seasonable now. 45

there never was a fitter Season, or more convenient Opportunity for applying ourselves to it with Zeal and Diligence. The Chief Governour of this Kingdom hath given Countenance to it, beyond what hath been formerly done; and our most Gracious Sovereign, hath upon his Application been pleased to recommend it to the Convocation; so that there is no doubt, of its getting all due Assistance and Encouragement from the Civil Powers.

The Exigence, and pressing Circumstances of the Times call aloud upon us, to put all our hands to this Work; Our Laws are preventing a Succession of *Popish* Clergy: In some Places they are sensibly decreasing; and if the Laws be put in Execution, almost the whole Order will be extinct within the Compass of Twenty or Thirty Years. Shall we therefore take their own Religion from them, and give them no other instead of it? Shall we deprive them of their own Teachers, and not supply them with Pastors, at whose Mouths they may learn the Law, and by this means either abandon them to utter Darkness, and Barbarity, or give them up as a Prey to Deceivers? The Concern which we have for the Souls of Men, and the Regard which we bear to the Honour and Reputation of our Church, surely will not permit us to do so.

If we sincerely desire, and wish for the Prosperity and Security of our excellent Constitution in Church and State, this is the surest and most effectual way of Promoting and Establishing both. By the Conversion of the *Irish*, all Fears and Jealousies from that Quarter will be removed, and we shall be safe and Easy in the Neighbourhood of those, whose Principles are always dangerous, and sometimes have been fatal to this Kingdom. And here-

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by the Publick Peace and Concord will be very much secured and preserved. By this means also great Numbers will be added to the Church, and the Strength of the Kingdom will be considerably augmented, for as Matters stand between them and us, we may reckon every true Profelyte to be two Persons gained to the Community: and considering the great Superiority of their Number, and their Dispositions towards us, this deserves the greatest Regard of every one, who values the Good and Welfare of *Ireland*. And it is not unworthy of our Consideration, that the *Irish* are a Nation, who have many valuable Qualities which recommend them to us, and render it very well worth our while, to endeavour to get them more firmly joined and united to us in the same Body Politick, that so all the parts may have the same Care one of another; They are remarkable for natural Affection, Hospitality, and Charity, which argues great Generosity of Mind; They are very teachable and tractable, and have Genius's capable of the best Improvement, if they had opportunity for it; and they are generally of a strong and vigorous Constitution of Body, which fits them for any sort of Labour, and by means thereof, they become very good Soldiers after a little Use and Practice. *on this point, should be no*
 But that which above all, should excite and quicken every one to set forward so good a Work, is the happy Opportunity which is thereby given him, of promoting the Salvation of Souls. I might if it were needful give a detail here of the many corrupt Doctrines which the Popish Natives Maintain, and pernicious Practices which they use to the great hazard of their Immortal Souls, but these things are well enough known: that which I would

And there is a great Reward promised to it. 47

urge from thence is, that by Converting them from their Superstition and Idolatry, we shall be the blessed Instruments of delivering their Souls from Darkness, and the shadow of Death, and of bringing them to God; we shall recover them from the dangerous and miserable Condition wherein they are, unto a safe and sure way to Salvation.

And to induce all Men to be Zealous and Active in so Pious and Charitable an Undertaking, God hath promised greatly to reward it; *Dan. 12. 3. They that turn many to Righteousness, shall shine as the Stars for ever and ever*

Nay, our Gracious God hath assured us, that upon this account He will deal more favourably with our selves; *Ja. 5. 19, 20. Brethren, if any of you do Err from the Faith, and one Convert him; Let him know, that he who Converteth the Sinner from the Error of his way, shall save a Soul from Death, and shall hide a multitude of Sins.* He who Converteth the Sinner from the Error of his way, shall not only save the Soul of his Convert; but shall also save his own Soul; For this Charitable Work will be so pleasing and acceptable to God, as to prevail with him to cover many of his Sins: The great Love and Affection which he shews for the Soul of his Brother, will move God the Father of Spirits, and Jesus Christ the Lover and Redeemer of Souls, to deal mercifully with his own Soul.

So that there is the greatest Encouragement given to induce us to use all our Endeavours to bring those who are in Darkness and Error, to the Acknowledgement of the Truth.

F I N I S .

